

suffered to remain without examination. To the simple, satisfactory, and easily-conducted experiments which supply that evidence, I again respectfully solicit the attention of naturalists.

XIX.—*Remarks on the Synonyms of a Homopterous Insect described in the last Number of the 'Annals.'* By ADAM WHITE, Assistant Zool. Dep. Brit. Mus.

IN the last Number of the 'Annals' there are descriptions of some Homopterous insects from the collection of the British Museum. Since the memoir was published, I have seen, for the first time, the text to Guérin's admirable 'Iconographie du Règne Animal' (a work which on the title-page bears the date of 1829-1838, although I see on the *wrapper* it was not finished till 1844, through some mistake of the printer [?]). I find an exceedingly great number of new genera and species of insects not figured in his plates, and on looking over it among the Homoptera saw a description of the *Pæciloptera circulata*, Guérin-Meneville, from the Malay coast, which is certainly the insect I have long subsequently published as the *Pæciloptera Dianthus*, so that this pretty species will now stand as

*Pæciloptera circulata*, Guérin, texte Iconogr. du Règne An. p. 361.

*P. Dianthus*, White, Proc. Ent. Soc. 1843 (ined.), Annals and Mag. of Nat. Hist. Jan. 1845, p. 36 (cum fig.).

*Hab.* Malay coast (Guérin), Java (Wilson).

To my description of *Cercopis Charon* (*l. c.* p. 35), I should have added "very near to, if not a variety of, *Cercopis viridans*, Guérin in Belanger, Voy. t. 3. f. 7."

In the text of M. Guérin's work, under the head of the genus *Aphæna*, he complains of the system of changing generic names, such as the one established by him, because not exactly properly compounded. The distinguished professor of zoology at Halle, on this ground, has given the genus alluded to the name *Aphæna*, and in his 'Handbuch der Entomologie,' ii. (we confine ourselves to the portion of his great work dedicated to *Rhynchota*), he has very frequently for similar reasons changed the names.

As a student of Hemiptera and Homoptera I for one raise my pen against this innovation, the more especially as it seems to have been a principle adopted by one of the best French entomologists, the able and amiable Serville, in his work on the Hemiptera in the 'Suites à Buffon'; an admirable book, so far as it goes, the joint production of MM. Serville and Amyot. If names are to be altered because improperly compounded, then let the dictum pass into a law, and many of the genera of Linnæus, Fabricius and Latreille, the fathers of entomology, *must* be changed. A fit of radicalism seems to have fallen upon most of the scientific describers of the present day: "If a name has been twice employed," say some, "in botany or zoology, the name last published must be changed;" others say, "No; if a name be already employed both in botany and zoology, retain them

both, but take care not to be guilty, if you can possibly help it, of falling into such a mistake again." If the former of these canons pass as unquestionable *law*, I believe at least one-sixtieth part of the names used in entomology, and even some of those employed for Crustacea and Aptaera, must be changed; and he who is bold enough to publish his catalogue first, will find *nobis* a well-marked feature on the page. We are inclined to think, that even if there be (for instance) two generic names (*Urania*) employed, one in botany and the other in zoology, no confusion can result from letting them retain their places, far less indeed to our view than must result from changing them; and it is really a sad thing to see, as is not unfrequently done, the changer have to change *his* name, because he has found that even *it* has been already used, so that we have sometimes *three* generic names, where at all events, on the most latitudinarian view of the subject, *two* would have been amply sufficient, and on the most narrow calculation, *one* would have caused no confusion. Thanks to the very useful 'Nomenclator Zoologicus' of Agassiz and his coadjutors, such mistakes are not nearly so likely to take place as they formerly were. In the work of Hahn on the Hemiptera, the name of *Bellocoris* has been applied to a genus; and this is one instance out of many that might be adduced of names compounded, and improperly compounded, of Latin and Greek words; but if I go, and not knowing whether M. Hahn means to say "Pretty Bug" or "War-Bug," and change his name, if the former of these popular paradoxes be the hemipterologist's meaning, to "*Polemocoris*," I conceive I make a most ridiculous blunder; and changers of names, and even those who too curiously pry into the designed or unintentional etymology of scientific appellations, frequently fall into equally false positions. Instances of this from the work above-quoted might be copiously given; and we are not sure, that if many of the exceedingly uncouth, but often good-enough, Chinese, Arabic and Sanscrit names imposed on Hemiptera and Homoptera by the truly scientific and amiable Serville and his coadjutor, were strictly analysed by such scholars as were Sir Wm. Jones, the Rev. Henry Martyn, Dr. Morrison, or Professor Kidd, many of them would be found equally ill-formed with Greek compounded names of other authors, which the distinguished French entomologists seem to me to have most recklessly changed. We wish to see an analysis of every zoological and botanical work and memoir published annually, and really believe that were any society here to join with the scientific societies on the continent, and in America or Asia, a yearly volume of this nature would tend to cement together naturalists, as it would assuredly help to simplify a nomenclature which scientific synonyms, most innocently bestowed, really make appalling to every student of zoology and botany.

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